



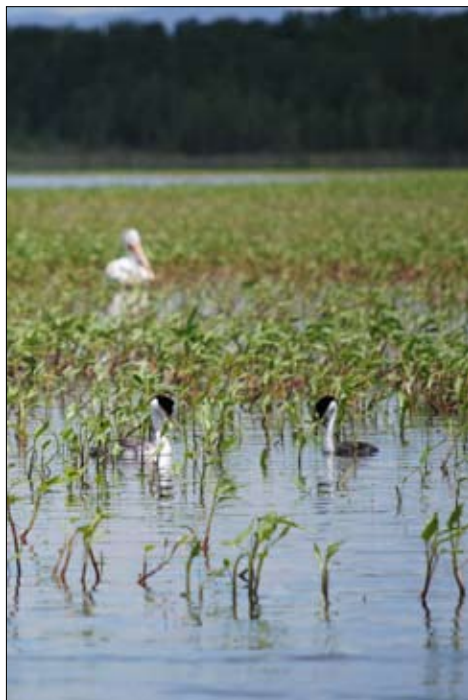
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Public Use Overview

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

Overview

Visitors to Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) can enjoy a variety of recreational activities, including wildlife-watching and photography, hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretation. The Refuge is open all year from dawn to dusk. Wildlife is generally most active in the mornings and early evenings.



With over 200 bird species and 30 mammal species on the Refuge, the patient observer or photographer has many excellent wildlife viewing opportunities.

Some areas of the Refuge are closed to protect wildlife. Please refer to the official Refuge brochure for a map and additional regulations.

Wildlife-Oriented Public Use

Hunting

One quarter of the Lake Lowell Unit is open to hunting of mourning dove, upland game birds, ducks and coots. The entire Snake River Islands Unit is open to hunting of mourning dove, upland game, waterfowl and deer. General state seasons and limits apply, and no special refuge permits are required.



Fishing

Fishing is popular at Lake Lowell. Anglers can catch a variety of game fish including largemouth bass, small-mouth bass, perch, crappie, bluegill, Lahontan cutthroat trout, channel catfish and brown bullhead.



Anglers may fish from the shoreline within open areas except during waterfowl hunting season.



Visitors can fish from watercraft on the entire lake April 15-September 30. From October 1-April 14, visitors may fish from human-powered watercraft within 200 feet of the Upper and Lower Dams.

During the boating season, there is a fishing dock that is accessible to people with mobility impairments at the west Upper Dam boat ramp.

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and Idaho Department of Health and Welfare have issued a fish consumption advisory for Lake Lowell due to high mercury levels, and a statewide fish consumption advisory for bass applies at the Snake River Islands.

Top: Kayakers at Lake Lowell/USFWS;

Left: Pair of grebes/USFWS;

Center: Hunting as a family/USFWS;

Center, below: Fishing on the lake/USFWS;

Above: Family of anglers/USFWS.



Wildlife Observation and Photography

These activities are permitted on all open areas of the Refuge. Some of the best locations are in the North Side Recreation Area west of the Visitor Center and at Schaeffer's access. Wildlife-watching and photography facilities are all in the North Side Recreation Area and include the Visitor Center viewing room and spotting scope, trails, two disabled-accessible wildlife-viewing platforms and a wildlife-viewing blind.



Environmental Education and Interpretation

The Refuge offers environmental education (EE) programs both on- and off-site to help promote an understanding of wildlife and the natural environment.

The EE Building at the Lower Dam Recreation Area is available for rent by teachers and youth-groups between April 15 and September 30 for conducting EE programs.

The Visitor Center includes interpretive displays about Refuge history, local natural history, Refuge management activities and the role of irrigation and recreation.

There are also interpretive kiosks at eight boat launches along the Snake River used to access the Snake River Islands Unit.



Non-Wildlife-Oriented Recreational Uses

As one of only two large reservoirs in the valley, Lake Lowell serves as a destination for water-based recreation. Activities include swimming and the use of motorized and non-motorized boats and other watercraft. Power boats often tow water skiers, wake boarders and tubers. Visitors also use the Refuge for dog walking, jogging and horseback riding.



Top: Birding along the lakeshore/
©Mike Shipman;

Left: Up close with spotting scopes/
©Mike Morrison

Boating is permitted during daylight hours between April 15 and September 30. Horseback riding and mountain biking are allowed on maintained roads and trails during daylight hours in designated recreation areas.



Future Management

All of the public uses on the Refuge will be reviewed during the Comprehensive Conservation Planning (CCP) process. The CCP is an exciting multi-year planning and public involvement process to develop a fifteen year management plan for the Refuge.

Every refuge is established for a purpose. The purpose for Deer Flat Refuge is to provide a refuge and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife, with waterfowl nesting and migratory bird habitat as management priorities.

A CCP is a long-term plan that ensures we manage a refuge to achieve its purpose in accordance with the policies and mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Once completed, the Refuge's CCP will be the blueprint used to improve Refuge conditions and manage fish, wildlife, plants and recreation.

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Center: Habitat Lap activity/USFWS;
Center bottom and right: A variety of
watercraft activities abound on the lake/
USFWS.